Symposium Presenters

Industry Spotlight Presenters

Lisa Taylor Ash

Chief Operating Officer & General Counsel
Shape Therapeutics Inc.

Lisa Taylor Ash is the Chief Operating Officer and General Counsel at Shape Therapeutics, Inc., a gene therapy biotechnology company developing novel therapies using RNA editing. She is also the founder and creator of Effective In-House, a resource website for in-house lawyers2. Lisa has over 10 years of experience in the biotechnology and healthcare industries. She previously served as an associate in a Healthcare private practice. Lisa holds a J.D. from Harvard Law School.

Mark Kafka

Vice President, Intellectual Property & Transactions
Denali Therapeutics

Mark leads Denali's Intellectual Property Team, and is the Legal Team lead on strategic transactions and other corporate development matters, bringing more than sixteen years of legal experience representing biotech and pharma companies. Prior to Denali, Mark was Senior Director, Associate General Counsel, at Genentech Inc., where he was responsible for intellectual property matters across multiple therapeutic areas. Prior to that, he served as Patent Counsel at Allergan Inc. Mark has a J.D. from the University of San Diego School of Law and B.S. and M.S. degrees in Chemistry from the University of California, San Diego.

John Kollins

CEO
Respira Therapeutics

John Kollins is the Chief Executive Officer and Corporate Director of Respira Therapeutics, Inc., a company focused on developing next-generation cardiopulmonary disease-targeted inhalation products, and has over 35 years of experience in the healthcare and pharmaceutical industries. John previously served as the CEO and co-founder of Satsuma Pharmaceuticals (Nasdaq:STSA), where he led the development of a groundbreaking drug-device combination product for migraine treatment and successfully closed the sale of the company in June 2023. He holds a B.S.E. from Duke University and an M.B.A. from the UVA Darden School.

Philip LoScalzo

Chief Compliance Officer
ImmunityBio, Inc.

Phillip LoScalzo is the Chief Compliance Officer at ImmunityBio, Inc., a biotechnology research company focused on developing cell and immunotherapy. In his role, he develops compliance and privacy programs and serves as the brand attorney for the commercialization of Anktiva, a treatment for non-muscle invasive bladder cancer. Before joining ImmunityBio, Phillip was the EVP of Compliance Audit Safety & Security (CAS) at BioMarin Pharmaceutical Inc. There, he directed the global compliance program, oversaw internal audit, global security, corporate business continuity, and the Environmental Health & Safety (EHS) department. He also managed the product attorney team, ensuring compliance with global healthcare promotional laws, regulations, and codes, and oversaw the launch of six products for rare diseases. Phillip holds a J.D. from Brooklyn Law School and a B.A. from Boston College.

Grace Han McMahon

AVP and Head, Pacific BD&L
Merck

Grace serves as Head of Transactions for Merck's BD&L Pacific Innovation Hub which encompasses the North American West Coast and Asia Pacific. Her team is responsible for structuring and negotiating partnerships with companies that offer differentiated early-stage therapeutic opportunities. Grace re-joined Merck after five years at Genentech where she led a team of transactional attorneys and negotiated collaboration, licensing, M&A and manufacturing transactions. Prior to Genentech, Grace was an in-house lawyer at Merck headquarters for ten years where she was the lead attorney on numerous early-stage, clinical and commercial transactions with biotech and biopharma companies in the U.S., Europe, Japan, China, India, and southeast Asia. Grace holds an M.B.A. from INSEAD in France and Singapore, a J.D. from New York University School of Law and a B.A. from the University of Virginia.

Andrew Shediac

Healthcare Investment Banking Director
TD Cowen

Andrew Shediac is currently the Healthcare Investment Banking Director at TD Cowen in San Francisco, California, a role he has held since January 2024. He has over seven years of experience at Cowen Inc., which he joined as an Analyst Prior to his tenure at TD Cowen, Andrew gained valuable experience as a Private Equity Intern at OrbiMed and an Intern at State Street Corporation. He holds a Bachelor of Arts in Economics, Psychology, and Organizational Studies from Denison University and attended Deerfield Academy.

Tammy Tompkins

Chief Legal Officer
Insitro

Tammy Tompkins, J.D., serves as Chief Legal officer of insitro. Tammy brings more than 25 years of legal and operational experience as well as extensive knowledge of the biotechnology industry. Tammy most recently served as chief legal officer at Neumora and before that, was general counsel of UNITY Biotechnology. In those roles, she served on the executive team, helped manage each company's IPO, and built the legal, intellectual property and compliance teams. Earlier, Tammy served as an operating partner, general counsel and chief administrative officer of Khosla Ventures, where she oversaw legal matters related to investments and funds; managed operational, investor relations and human resource matters; and served on the boards of several KV portfolio companies. Prior to Khosla Ventures, Tammy served as the general counsel of Amyris.

Covington Presenters

Scott Cunningham
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For nearly 25 years, Scott has helped drug, biotechnology, and cell/gene therapy companies navigate their most crucial FDA regulatory issues. His practice covers the full range of a product's life cycle, from clinical development strategy and GCP compliance; to product approval and regulatory exclusivities (e.g., Orphan Drug); to post-approval considerations such as GMPs, pharmacovigilance, and product promotion. Scott also routinely counsels clients on critical fraud and abuse matters, such as compliance with the Anti-kickback Statute. Based in Covington's San Francisco office, Scott frequently works with early-stage biotechnology and regenerative medicine companies.

Alexa Hansen
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Alexa Hansen is a partner in Covington's Patent Litigation Practice Group and represents clients in patent matters in federal court and the Patent Trial and Appeals Board, with an emphasis on pharmaceutical and biological patents. In addition to her litigation work, she also provides patent analysis for product acquisitions and financial transactions. Alexa is noted as an "up and coming" patent litigation attorney in California by Chambers USA, which describes her as "increasingly recognized for her adept handling of high-stakes patent disputes." She was also designated as one of Daily Journal's Top Health Care lawyer in California in 2022 and 2023, and a Top Intellectual Property Lawyer in 2022 and 2023.

Joe Franklin
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Joe Franklin is a special counsel in Covington's Food, Drug, and Device Practice Group. His practice includes emerging medical technologies, research uses of real world and clinical trial data, and the deployment of artificial intelligence in healthcare and biopharma. He brings experience in both government and the health tech sector to advise clients on the unique challenges and opportunities posed by evolving regulatory frameworks for novel technologies. Joe was at Verily, Alphabet's precision health company, from 2021-2024, where his roles included Chief Counsel for Regulatory and Strategic Affairs. During his years of federal service, Joe held several senior policy roles at FDA, including as policy director for FDA Principal Deputy Commissioner Amy Abernethy. At FDA, Joe played a central role in the Agency's technology and data modernization strategy and had responsibilities for a broad portfolio of regulatory and scientific programs. While in FDA's Center for Drug Evaluation and Research (CDER), Joe built and led the biosimilars policy staff in the Office of New Drugs (OND). Joe was FDA's Deputy Chief of Staff in 2015.

Amy Leiser
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Amy Leiser is a special counsel in Covington's Medical Devices Industry Group and assists medical device, clinical laboratory, pharmaceutical, and biotechnology clients to operate within a complex, highly regulated area in a way that supports achieving their business goals while minimizing regulatory and litigation risks. With a focus on medical device, digital health, and diagnostic products and laboratory services, Amy regularly advises clients on a variety of regulatory, legislative, and compliance matters, including under the Federal Food, Drug & Cosmetic Act (FDCA), Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments (CLIA), and state clinical laboratory laws. In her work with both new and established companies, Amy regularly counsels clients on development and marketing pathways for new products and services, including considerations relating to the scope of FDA's medical device jurisdiction as it relates to digital health tools and laboratory testing services; issues surrounding classification, clearance, and approval of new devices; and issues uniquely impacting combination products.

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Ingrid Rechtin is a partner in Covington's Corporate Practice Group and assists clients in the evaluation, structuring, negotiation and implementation of mergers and acquisitions and other complex strategic transactions and partnering arrangements. With over 20 years of experience, she provides strategic legal advice to public and private companies in a diverse range of industries, including life sciences, technology, consumer goods and manufacturing sectors, ranging from start-ups to global corporations, supporting clients in achieving their strategic goals while managing legal risks. Ingrid advises clients on joint ventures, stock and asset acquisitions, option deals, product divestitures, global internal restructurings (including both pre-deal separation and post-merger integration projects), venture capital financings and other strategic investments, complex commercial transactions and general corporate matters, and has deep experience structuring and navigating cross-border transactions. She also has extensive experience in strategic investments in IP, including acquisitions and divestitures of patent portfolios and complex patent monetization transactions.

Matthew Shapanka
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Matthew Shapanka practices at the intersection of law, policy, and politics. He advises clients before Congress, state legislatures, and government agencies, helping businesses to navigate complex legislative, regulatory, and investigations matters, mitigate their legal, political, and reputational risks, and capture business opportunities. Drawing on more than 15 years of experience on Capitol Hill and in private practice, state government, and political campaigns, Matt develops and executes complex, multifaceted public policy initiatives for clients seeking actions by Congress, state legislatures, and federal and state government agencies. He regularly counsels and represents businesses in legislative and regulatory matters involving intellectual property, national security, regulation of critical and emerging technologies like artificial intelligence, connected and autonomous vehicles, and other tech policy issues. He also represents clients facing congressional investigations or inquiries across a range of committees and subject matters.

Einar Stole
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Einar Stole is a partner in Covington's Patent Litigation Practice Group and specializes in complex pharmaceutical and chemical patent litigation in the US district courts, including numerous cases involving generic drug approvals and the Hatch-Waxman Act. Einar's litigation and counseling experience has focused on matters involving pharmaceuticals, chemicals, chemical processes, and biotechnology such as genetically-engineered enzymes and DNA-based diagnostic methods. He counsels clients on a range of intellectual property and litigation matters, including patent infringement, validity, and enforceability. Einar also has experience prosecuting chemical and biotechnology patent applications in the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office, including appeals and interferences before the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences.

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Lindsey Tonsager co-chairs Covington's global Data Privacy and Cybersecurity Practice Group. She advises clients in their strategic and proactive engagement with the Federal Trade Commission, the U.S. Congress, the California Privacy Protection Agency, and state attorneys general on proposed changes to data protection laws, and regularly represents clients in responding to investigations and enforcement actions involving their privacy and information security practices. Lindsey's practice focuses on helping clients launch new products and services that implicate the laws governing the use of artificial intelligence, data processing for connected devices, biometrics, online advertising, endorsements and testimonials in advertising and social media, the collection of personal information from children and students online, e-mail marketing, disclosures of video viewing information, and new technologies.

Amy Toro
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Amy Toro advises both pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies regarding biologics, pharmaceuticals and devices, including in the digital health space. Amy works on all types of life sciences transactions, including major collaborations, licensing arrangements, clinical trial agreements, supply and distribution agreements, product development funding deals, and joint ventures and a variety of commercial agreements. She also works with her mergers and acquisition colleagues on product divestitures and asset transfers.